Mingling with the Boiling Frog

[

FP: You don't think it can happen to you?

[

FS: *No*. Of course not. No way.

[

FP: Why's that?

[

FS: Simple, I'm not like *them*.

[

FP: Them?

[

FS: *Them.* You *know* who I'm talking about.

[

FP: Let's pretend for a minute that I don't.

[

FS: No, I don't wanna *entertain* that.

[

FP: *Right.* So, you acknowledge a "them,"

but you won't go any further.

[

FS: I don't *have* to go any further. I can do

whatever the f**k I want. This is

America, so don't try and patronize me.

I'm impervious to your _____

bulls**t, and besides, they'll all

be *gone* soon, anyway.

[

FP: You seem pretty *okay* with that.

[

FS: Of course I am! *They* don't *belong* here.

They _____, and they _____!

Believe *me,* when they're gone, every last

F**king one of 'em, this country

will be much better, you'll see. *You* think it's

wrong now, with your heart on your sleeve

and everything, but that'll pass. All the

_____ like you will *see* when you

come back to *reality.*

[

FP: *You think?* Who do you think will be *next?*

[

FS: Next? There's no *next.* After _____ gets rid of all the

_____, *then* we'll be good. _____ banned a good

bunch of 'em comin' in, so all _____'s got to do is

clean up *this place*. All _____ wants to

do is follow through…just keeping _____ *promise.*

_____'s a straight shooter, a _____ of the people!

You, and *people like you* just don't see it because

you been fed that woke s**t for so long, you

started to believe it. It's *alright* though. You

aren't the only one. I got a cousin's just like you.

Every time we see each other it's like the UFC

or something, but it's all gonna be *good*. You just

watch! When _____ gets rid of all the trash in this place, it's gonna be beautiful again, like when our *forefathers* got here. And you don't got to worry, because when _____ says something, _____ does it! The _____*follows through.*

[

FP: *Right.* Like when *our* forefathers were here…

[

FS: *Yeah*, you know what I'm talkin' about, like the Mayflower an s**t! With the hats and the feast, you know, *Thanksgiving.*

[

FP: You know it *didn't* happen like that, right? The people who were already here when *we* got here, weren't exactly *thrilled* we had come, and of course, once we started killing them, there wasn't a *doubt* in their mind. The 1621 event that is referenced wasn't even called *Thanksgiving*. That came *later.* It was a meeting that took place during a harvest gathering of the Plymouth Colonists. Ninety Wampanoag'd been sent there to work on a mutual security negotiation.

[

FS: I don't care. *Honestly,* I don't give a f**k. *We're* in charge now, *again,* like it shoulda' been all along. And those _____,

they're in the places *we* put them, so I don't worry about 'em. I can definitely see _____ getting around to bulldozing all those _____ at some point and making them into, I don't know, maybe a couple new _____, like the one _____ just cut the ribbon for in _____. You know, maybe a carnival, like a year round carnival. Yeah, I could see that. It'd probably put all the fun parks outta business. The _____ has the *midas touch*, I tell ya. And there's *nothin'* better than that! Wish *I* had it *myself.*

[

FP: You do *know* that _____ said all the time on the trail that _____'d never _____, and now, just in the past weeks, _____'s done the opposite?!

[

FS: *Sure*…but s**t happens. _____'s *human.* Nothing is for *certain*, anyway. *You* know that. You also know that the people on *your side* have done just as much, broken just as many promises, and you would be, *still,* if ____hadn't ____.

[

FP: Do you think this visceral division is *beneficial* for the country?

[

FS: It's *always* been this way! We're a *two-party system,* so, of course people move to whatever *side* they feel reflects their own beliefs the *best.* Isn't that division by *default*?

[

FP: *This* is more like *tribalism.* Like there's members of groups circling round the last piece of meat brandishing their weapons.

[

FS: O…k, well, I don't know about all *that*. I think we're all still communicating *civilly,* so I don't see no "circling with weapons," but I will tell you, if the day does come, there's no doubt we'll be *ready!*

[

FP: *Ready* to?

[

FS: *Fight for what's* ***ours****!* Jesus, what'dyou think I'm talkin' about Einstein?

[

FP: Of course, *silly* me forgetting and all. Still, a lot of *your people* are starting to *abandon* ship, or, at the very least, starting to ponder it. A lot of 'em say they were *lied* to.

[

FS: You know we're *not* all the *same,* right? There might be a movement, sure, but you _____

have your dips**t f**king movements too.

There's _____, and _____. I could go on!

But it's not like *they* are all walking a straight line.

I hate it because you always think that _____ is

just one big thing, and like we're all *marching*

in sync or whatever. I'd say there are *stronger* and *weaker*

parts, you know? S**t like what you're getting' at,

jumpin' ship an all, that's what the *weak* are doing,

not the *die-hards* like *yours truly.*

[

FP: _____ still sounds like a _____ to me.

It might be a _____ with *levels,* but it's

still a _____.

[

FS: It's not a _____, *not* a _____ at all.

[

FP: Then *what* is it?

[

FS: I'll *tell* you! We're the *winning team*, is what we *are.*

_____'s gonna change the world, and you just can't

handle it. Thing is, you're going to *have* to handle it!

[

FP: It makes you feel good when you *assert* that,

right?

[

FS: Yeah, it *does.* You guys…you _____ are

sore losers.

[

FP: Didn't seem like you guys *handled* _____'s win that well. What with the _____ of the _____ and everything! Seems like _____ whined pretty loud *then*.

[

FS: Minor *setback*. Meant *nothing* really. Just gave us more time to *plan.* Besides, *this* is a *revolution.* I still don't think the lot of you _____ understand. It was *then*, still is now. And _____'s with us the whole way! You _____ just can't understand that because there is no coalescence in the actions you guys take. No concise *vision. We* have *focus.* We *know* what needs to be done, and everybody in our "_____," as you call it, is full of love for each other! S**t, I bet that *anybody,* who's part of _____ would *certainly* lay down their lives for another!

[

FP: You *sure* about that?

[

FS: *Sure? Yes,* I'm *sure.* You just don't get the love, the *camaraderie* thing. Half the reason you_____ can never get your s**t

together is because you're *broken*
into pieces. Not just that, but all the
pieces seem to have problems with
each other. Best chance you had 'gainst
our _____ was with that candidate from Vermont…
What was his name? Billy…
[
FP: *Bernie?*
[
FS: Yeah, that's him! He really *stood* for the
working class, was speaking to a lot of the
same folk that _____ was. Obviously,
you *still* woulda' *lost*, but you would've come
closer, you know. S**t, that woulda' been
crazy when the two of em' debated. _____
might've not mopped the floor with Bernie
like he did the rest of you. But then, the
socialist thing, *that* would rub *our people*
wrong.
[
FP: 'Cause you're all scared of *commies?*
[
FS: Nah, I don't even think anybody really
even knows *what* a commie is. It's
just *that* way of thinking opposes what
we got *now*, and we want *that* to stay.
Like the whole *free* market thing, you know?

That's what I'm talking about.

[

FP: Not only that, but you want to _____.

[

FS: *Exactly!* And we're right on course,

right on time…

[

FP: Do you think _____ will _____ all

the commies?

[

FS: Nah. I mean, how would you even be able to

tell who they are, unless they were like

walking around with *berets* on or

something.

[

FP: So, who *do* you think is next, if not the

commies?

[

FS: I don't *know.* Think I said that earlier.

But yeah, then I *did* talk about the _____

being bulldozed, so maybe *them?* Be easier

to arrest 'em all and *then* do *construction.*

Could be all these people identifyin' as

bookshelves, you know. I can't say I'd

cry myself to sleep if *they* went. But what

I *do* know, is that there's a *longer list*

before the commies. I mean, what

_____'s doin' *now* isn't even finished
yet, and it's gonna take a while
'cause some of 'em have *actually*
naturalized!
[
FP: How *dare* they.
[
FS: *Yeah*, sucks, because it makes it harder to get
rid of 'em, at least *right now*. I'm *thinkin'*
though, that when all their friends and family
are gone, because you know *they're* not
supposed to f**kin' be here, then maybe
they'll go *too*, you know, just to be with 'em,
like a *package deal*.
[
FP: *Voluntarily?*
[
FS: Yeah. I mean, I think that'd be the *best*
For *everybody*. 'Cause I sure as hell
don't wanna spend any more *taxpayer's*
money dealing with them.
[
FP: So *how* exactly do you think this would
go down?
[
FS: Well. I guess _____ would just *revoke*
their naturalization…or their citizenship…

or *whatever is keeping them here.* Then they'd *all* be *criminals,* right? They'd *all* be here illegally and we could *dispose* of them as such. I mean, half of 'em are all *criminals* anyway, maybe even *more* than that. S**t, I keep hearing these stories of 'em jumpin' the fence to come rob and rape, so, I figure once we got the greenlight from the _____, we just flush 'em out as *quickly* as possible.

[

FP: *"Flush 'em out?* Are you saying you're gonna start killing them?

[

FS: Nah, nah, nah…*back up*. I mean, if it comes to that, then *sure,* s**t's gonna have to be *done*, but I think we can get 'em out without having to *resort* to such a measure.

[

FP: *Phew,* we'll *that's* a f**kin' relief! Glad you guys have your *standards*---some line to be crossed. Delving further. Before you *have* to "resort" to killing them, given the *green light* an all, after all those who are legally here have been made *illegal*, how do you think you'd round them up for deportation?

[

FS: Well, most of them have jobs, I bet. Isn't that part of the *becoming-a-citizen* thing? Anyway, we just send cops or soldiers, or cops *and* soldiers to their workplace and *arrest* them.

[

FP: Those cops gonna be wearing those *masks* like in *L.A.?*

[

FS: Of course! You know, I think it makes it *easier* for them. I can't believe anybody didn't think of it *ages* ago. *Why* should the police have to *reveal* their identity? Just so some f**k can get them doing something that is *part of their job* and blow it up online? Like their job isn't hard enough, having to crack down on these _____.

[

FP: You don't think people have *lawyers,* or will attain them, to *fog* your whole process up with lawsuits?

[

FS: Yeah, but see, *that* is *unfortunately* where the *violence* comes into play. If these _____ don't do what they're *told*, when *we* tell 'em, then, like I said,

we already got the *green light*.

[

FP: So, then what happens? The whole country just goes apes**t? Because you know a lot of people aren't gonna go away *quietly.* They'll *fight back.*

[

FS: *Sure,* but you got to remember, *we* have the _____ in the _____. *We* got the *green light,* and, we will have the entire United States Military at our fingertips. No matter what *anybody* has in the way of weapons, *we* will have them *beat*, understand?

[

FP: *Sure.* It's a pretty *obvious* point you're making. Of course, no one can top the might of the military, *domestically.*

[

FS: Eh, I'd have to say that *internationally* we got it covered as well. No one's gonna f**k with *us*.

[

FP: Yeah, you say that, but didn't someone *already* f**k with us a couple of decades ago?

[

FS: You mean like *9/11?*

[

FP: Yup.

[

FS: Well, I'd say they got us when *our guard was down.* It was a *cheap shot!* They used tactics we hadn't thought about, and it probably wouldn'ta happened if *your side* hadn't kept the country so soft.

[

FP: *Soft?* What do you mean soft? *Your guy* was in office, don't you remember? Baby _____.

[

FS: Ah, yeah, right. My mistake. Anyway, the point is, some people just got..to..go, and the _____ in power will see that it's *done!*

[

FP: Can I tell you a story? It's a quick one, Don't *worry,* I can work within the parameters of your *screen-addicted* attention span.

[

FS: Yeah *sure*. Seems like you got to 'cause you're not getting' to the *point* any other way here.

[

FP: *Right.* Well, When I was younger, I went to Germany on holiday…

[

FS: *Holiday?* What holiday?

[

FP: Not *a* holiday. Holiday is what they call vacation in the UK, Europe, you know, especially from school, college, which is set up a little different over there. I was really *lucky,* I got to go to London for my last semester of undergrad.

[

FS: So you *willingly* hung out with Eurotrash, or what is it, what should I call trash from the UK…I guess UK-trash works! You went there of your own free will? *Why?*

[

FP: Well, initially somebody asked me to go with 'em, but you know, I would'a jumped at the chance if I even *thought* I had a chance of going.

[

FS: So *how* did you go? It must've crazy expensive. Betcha' got money from your parents, didn't ya? Goin' off to the f**kin' UK, Europe, on *their* dime! *Typical* s**t. This is why you _____ are always whining about not having money, and wanting *others* to have money *too,*

because *they* made the same stupid
decisions *you* did.
[
FP: Look, I thank them a million times over
for helping me to do that. It meant a lot
to me from day one. Good parents do
things for their kids. I don't know
what I can say except *thank you.*
[
FS: How about you shoulda' *stayed home*
and got a f**kin' *job*, and *then* you
could've gone wherever you wanted.
[
FP: Things just didn't *happen* that way.
[
FS: *Sure, they don't.* What you do, if you
have any *decency*, is you *make* 'em
happen that way. You can't be just
walkin' around in this world doin'
whatever you *want.* You _____
think you don't have to *answer* to
anybody.
[
FP: Look, I was trying to tell you something
and *you* took us off in a *tangent*. I
wanna reel it back in.
[

FS: Yeah, *no problem.* Let's just steer it back to where *you'd* like to be, _____.

[

FP: Look, what I was talking about was *Germany*, when I was there, and what I saw when I went to Dachau.

[

FS: *Where's* Dachau? Is it near Berlin? The only city I know in Germany is Berlin.

[

FP: No, it's over 300 miles from Berlin. Less than 20 from Munich, in the southeast. It was the Nazis' *first* concentration camp. Dachau isn't the *name* of the camp though, but rather the *town* where it was set up to imprison Hitler's political enemies, like commies, union leaders, journalists, Jehovah's Witnesses, homosexual men, liberal thinkers of any kind, and, at the time Jewish Germans critical of the regime in its *infancy.* But unlike *later* camps solely focused on his horrific campaign to *exterminate* all the Jews of the world, Dachau was very much about *entrenching* his power in March of '33, a couple of months

after he became Chancellor. Having already burned the Reichstag down, blaming it on some extremely unlucky patsy, he then passed the *Enabling Act* and opened Dachau. This is when the civil liberties of Germans in general were *suspended,* censorship was *normalized,* and mass arrests and raids ushered in what they called *Schutzhaft.*

[

FS: So, *hold up*. I thought Hitler was just *about* the Jews. I mean I don't mean to emphasize "Jews" *there*, it sounds racist or something, but what I mean is, I didn't know he was arresting gay guys, union people, even Jehovah's Witnesses… s**t, was he gonna try and genocide *them* next? *The Witnesses?* I mean it makes *sense* that he'd kill off his political rivals…

[

FP: It *does?*

[

FS: Well, yeah. If you're gonna

try and get the *most* power,
you're gonna *have to* imprison or
kill off *anybody* that doesn't
want you to have it, *no?* And *this*
guy was *Hitler*, you know.
Not like he was working
with a *full deck* to begin with.
[
FP: Are you saying *because* he was
a dictator…
[
FS: Yeah, of course. I'm sure that
every other *dictator* has done
the same thing. S**t, there's probably
a *manual* they *all* have. I'm talking like
the suspension of rights and
the killing of political
rivals. I don't mean the *other*
people he was killing and *definitely*
not the Holocaust. That all
seems *particular* to Hitler.
What's *Shoot-Staff* mean
anyway? I say it right?
[
FP: Doesn't matter. It means
protective custody.
[

FS: *So?* Sounds *good* to me. Isn't *that* what the FBI does when like the mafia is after you or whatever? You know, before they relocate you, give you a new name and the whole thing?

[

FP: That's the *Witness Protection Program* you're thinking of. *No,* Schutzhaft was nothing like that. What it was, was the Nazis arresting you *without charges, trial, or judicial oversight*. This concept of "protection" was used to ensure the "regular" Germans, you know, the ones that *hadn't* been sent away to the *camps* or *killed outright,* that the government was doing its *best* to protect *them* from *enemies of the state*…or rather, more specifically, *the Reich.*

[

FS: Oh s**t, are you seriously saying that _____ is gonna start doing this? You guys are always acting like _____'s got swastikas hanging all over the capitol!

Like there's f**king *brown shirts* in the streets! *And*, isn't there that guy, a scientist or professor or something, who came up with that theory that in any argument, *you guys* will inevitably bring up Hitler, because, like, you have no other way to argue, to fight? Is *that* what you're doing now? S**t, what was that guy's name… it had "god" in it! The word *god,* but you know, in a name. F**k, what was it? God…God *something…*

[

FP: *Godwin's Law. That's* what you're talking about.

[

FS: *Yeah*, that sounds right!

[

FP: Godwin's a *lawyer*, or he *was* a lawyer. Must be in his 70s now. He made an observation, apparently meant to be *satirical* more than anything else, but it's been called a *law.* He found *patterns* in online conversations when the internet was just starting out. His default research pool being *Usenet,* a *free and decentralized,* earlier version of today's *centralized*

Reddit.

[

FS: Wait, what time period is this? Must be like the ‘70s.

[

FP: Nah, more like the ‘80s, but the internet then was basically just used by academics, researchers and the government, Usenet was really just a bunch of articles and posted messages found in groups that revolved around any specific topic…

[

FS: So he found some chatrooms full’a *Neos* chattin’ Nazi?

[

FP: No, not like *you’re* thinking.
It wasn’t a f**king *fan club*.
It was a pattern that Godwin saw occurring as an argument online would get more and more intense between two disagreeing parties.
He found that if it got *passionate* enough, *volatile* enough, that all *rationality* would go out the window and the comparison to Hitler or the Nazis would be made, almost as a *method* to *stifle* the other participant in hopes to

end the fight. If this *didn't* occur,
the use of Hitler and the Nazis would
most likely derail all rationality,
reducing the debate to mere emotion,
inevitably drowning in hyperbole.
You see it *all* the time. People do it,
sometimes without even *realizing*
the *weight* of the comparison being
made. People will lazily throw it in
to a conversation they want out of,
bookending it and walking away.
[
FS: So it's a *tactic*. Just like I said.
That's what *you* _____ do,
whenever there's a _____
or a _____ of mine in the room.
[
FP: *No,* I don't think that's the case.
If that *is* the case, then it's just
ignorant. Ignorant or lazy, or
both. Hell, I don't even know if
one could claim that half of
_____ even knows what their
_____ are. I feel that a
_____ came along a _____
ago, and placed a large wicker
basket on the ground. Each new

_____ got tossed in, and when
_____ thought it was the right
time, _____ began to play
_____ flute. Instead of the
_____ being charmed, _____
rose from the basket, swaying
serenely in *unison* to the sound's
allure.
[
FS: *Wow,* that's some *deep* imagery right
there. I'm being *facetious*, but yeah,
that's some deep imagery you're
spinning.
[
FP: Look, if there were people
Godwin observed who were
intentionally bringing Nazis into the
conversation, the pattern wouldn't
be the same. The pattern that he
identified was one of the subjects
coming to a certain locus of energy
and exhaustion, where people
resort to the *usage,* not a conversation
specifically about Nazis. I mean, I'm
sure it be hard to close one's eyes,
throw a rock, and *not* hit a Nazi
screaming until their throat goes

raw on _____, but that *wouldn't*
prove Godwin, not that we're trying
to *prove* Godwin anyway. This
theory was never reviewed by
scientists, ever put to the test, etc.,
Like I said, Godwin's a *lawyer,*
he couldn't be peer reviewed,
because all his peers are *sharks.*
[
FS: *What?* You *lost* me. So, it's *not*
really a law?
[
FP: Well, no, not like Keppler or gravity,
or anything like *that.* Honestly, I don't know
why the word even gets attached.
I guess because "Godwin's
Observation," sounds less *authoritative*?
[
FS: Yup. Sounds *boring.* Sounds like
_____, actually. You guys are
always got them *crocodile tears*
every time you hear what you don't
want and yet if _____ claims
anything is _____, then _____
are the boogeymen!
[
FP: Well, might I remind you, *you* brought

it up.

[

FS: *Right*, well I can't even remember why,
now. I know you started telling a story
when I *budged* in. *Sorry* about that.
Continue, *please.*

[

FP: *Sure.* So, when I went to Germany, because
I had only a short bit of time, I visited only
Berlin and Munich. I got off the train at Munich
Hauptbahnhof, which is the central station,
and from there I took the S2 S-Bahn line
toward Dachau Bahnhof, the Dachau Station.
From there I *could* have taken the
726 Bus *or* walked the 45 minutes it took
to get to the Royal Bavarian Powder
and Ammunition Factory which is what
was converted into the camp. Now
it's the *Dachau Concentration Camp*
Memorial. In choosing to walk instead
of taking the bus, I imagined a Germany
not long ago, a people that had
been *lucky* enough to avoid death,
when so much death was *all around*
them. When I went to a small
grocery store, I wondered
about those who *were* either Nazis

themselves, active supporters, or
those complicit in a convenient
ignorance, all going about their
day, buying their goods, standing
in line with me. I tried to understand
how so many were complicit in their
ignorance, while at the same time living
so close to the camp. They were able to
clearly hear the screams and *smell* the
ovens *burning*. Had they *somehow*
come to *block* it *all* from their hearts
and minds, *or* did the *fear* of what *would*
happen if they *did care*, and worse yet,
possibly *act*, wash a *quiet happiness*
over them, *content* with the knowledge
that *they* themselves had *not* been dealt
the *same fate?*

[

FS: *Yes,* they were f**ked up, no
doubt! But what are you tryin'
to say? You think _____ is gonna
commit another _____? _____ was
on _____ for christ's sake! *Believe me*
when I tell you, ____ hasn't got it in _____.

[

FP: What I'm saying is that _____
displays a kind of _____ for

it's leader, that has never been seen in this country. There are things that happen, s**t, things started on day one, that with any other person, at any other time, would be grounds for *removal.* And yet, either _____ heralds it, acting as if _____ is a born comedian, *or* they say it's _____ and sweep it under the rug. Meanwhile, just like those living close to the camp in Nazi Dachau going on about their day, the _____ of this country are watching the terror form in *real time*, muttering to themselves that *it can't happen here, it can't happen here.* Just like Lewis in the '30s. Just glad that they themselves are okay, legit, and *safe.*

[

FS: *My god*, you are so *dramatic.*

[

FP: *Yeah?*

[

FS: Yeah. This country has been around for almost 250 years! You think things goin' on *now* are gonna be the straw that broke the camel? *Notta chance*.

[

FP: Okay, let me ask you this, do you know anything about dictators throughout the last century? Did you pay attention at all, in any history class, *ever?*

[

FS: F**k off! I graduated from _____, so I think I know a thing or two. And *of course,* history was something I *had* to take.

[

FP: *World history,* or just US History?

[

FS: I had to take the two *required* ones. One was like everything before 1945 and the other was everything after 1945. Why?

[

FP: Do you remember any *authoritative leaders*, or dictators in the 20th century, *besides* Hitler?

[

FS: There's *Stalin, Mao…*uh, there's that Spanish guy, the guy that *ruled* Spain, who, I think he let Hitler fly his planes in his war, didn't he, seeing as Germany was *meant to abide* by the stipulations of *Vienna*.

[

FP: *Franco,* is the name of that *Spanish guy who ruled Spain.*

[

FS: Yeah! That's him.

[

FP: What do you know about *Stalin?* He kill a lot of people?

[

FS: *S**t yeah!* He killed *millions.* First off, He took out a ton of Nazis, pulling the heavy weight of the war, if you ask me, and then his *own people*. This guy was a monster, killing off his fellow citizens, having a secret police, like total surveillance and the lot.

[

FP: How'd he come to power?

[

FS: Eh, there was a *revolution,* I remember that. The royal family that ruled Russia for hundreds of years, got seized and shot by a firing squad!

[

FP: Who was running things at the time, like among the revolutionaries?

[

FS: Right, well, it wasn't Stalin, because he came a little after. He filled in when the head honcho died. S**t, I can't remember his name. But he's in a *tank!* They keep him, the Russians, in a glass tank or something, so that people can come see him. Pretty *gross* if you ask me. Why do I think he…he was *bald!* Bald and he had this killer goatee. All the pictures show him with one of those revolutionary hats. You know, the ones that like, crush down…or maybe that was just *a* hat that *he* wore, so I *associate* it with revolution.

[

FP: Look, I'm gonna help you out. His name was *Lenin*. After he died, Stalin took power, and it is said that Lenin comprised a letter in late '22 known as "Lenin's Testament," *warning* not to let Stalin have *authority* after he died. Of course, once Stalin *did* take power, he stopped the letter from being published, and sent someone all the way to Mexico to assassinate Trotsky, the man who Lenin favored being his successor. The point being that Lenin and all those aligned with him, *saw what was coming.* And you can imagine that once Lenin was dead and Stalin took power, most of those who were aligned with Lenin and Trotsky suddenly *disappeared.*

[

FS: And this reflects on *today,* how? _____ is not a commie. _____'s not a Nazi, not a fascist like so many of you _____ like to say. _____'s a _____ through and through.

[

FP: You're missing the point. Do you know any other tyrants from the 20th Century besides the ones you've said?

[

FS: Honestly, I don't know any more than that. That's all I remember from my history classes, and frankly, I only remember a *little bit* about Mao, and I don't know a goddamn thing about Franco except that he was Spanish.

[

FP: Well, there were *others* responsible for the mass deaths of the last century. Besides the three *you* mentioned, if you listed them in terms of how many they killed, with Mao at the top, you'd have Pol Pot coming up fourth, then Talat Pasha following at five, and Kim Jong-il, Suharto, Haile Mariam, Khan, and either Amin or Hussein at the end. Don't ask me to remember all the countries they ruled. I'm amazed I remembered all the names in the correct order. Franco doesn't make *that* list, nor do a lot of others who murdered a whole slew of people

during the same time period. The list changes a bit if you include the variable "killed their own citizens." *Then* Franco gets *his* place and somebody else gets kicked out. Of course, *all* authoritative regimes kill their *own* people, as a way of *consolidating* power.

[

FS: So, who were *they* killin'? What *groups* I mean. Hitler was trying to rid the world of Jewish people, we all know that, but Stalin, I guess the counter-revolutionaries? He was probably trying to gut Russia of all the non-commies too…the ones that weren't *down* with what was happenin'.

[

FP: Many had groups of people that were targeted at the beginning of their regimes, *sure*. This served two purposes, one, they were able to identify and kill off the dissenters, usually political dissidents, teachers, journalists, union organizers, clergy, and two, they reaped the award of causing great fear in the hearts of those still left alive, paralyzing them into non-action by making them sigh a breath of relief that *they* had not yet been singled out.

[

FS: Seems like they just wanted to
kill off the *smart people*, well,
and clergy and the union guys-
not really sure where they lie.

[

FP: *Silencing* anyone thought to
cause a *rift* in the new
authoritarian policy being
handed down, was of
utmost importance, it *always* is.
And as a dictator gets more
powerful, they become more
paranoid that their power can
be *taken* from them by those
around them. *This* is when they turn
on their own *allies*, their former
supporters. Stalin had his
famous show trials, and others
have used similar purges. Public
executions are always a go-to
as well, as they serve to terrify
citizens simultaneously with
getting rid of the opposition.
Seeing a person put to death
in *public,* rather than just hearing
stories of what's happening

elsewhere, will definitely *stay*
with a person for some time,
most likely deterring them from
pursuing the action they might've
had planned. And *know* that, if
you haven't been tortured or
f**ked with in any *other* way,
you can *always* find yourself
branded an "enemy of the state."
This can destroy a former
ally's reputation, causing the public
who might feel so *inclined*, to
rightfully assume it's *open*
season on them. In a country
like *ours,* wherein everyone is
armed to the *teeth*, such a person
would hardly have a chance to
defend themselves.

[

FS: You saying that the public would
do the job *for* the regime?

[

FP: *Some* would, *certainly*, if there are
no consequences, except a soldier
patting you on the back because
you got to them *first.* Such actions
can begin to make many citizens doubt

the utter holiness with which they
proudly illuminated their *hero*,
opening their eyes to the lies
that they'd been told which have
formed the bedrock of the regime.
This is when the mass
killing of the public can begin.
Any and *all* disloyalty must be
crushed, be it real or *imaginary*,
in the mind of the great leader.
Mass arrests will fill prisons
without trial, taking advantage
of forced labor, with disease
abound, often starvation,
and remember that torture is
always right around the corner.
[
FS: So is this separate from concentration
camps? "Gulags," I think Stalin called
his.
[
FP: No, Gulags were basically *known* camps
for breaking individuals, very much bent
on psychological torture. Many regimes
will use *covert* facilities that are hidden,
most likely *outside* the residential areas.
The point being that the regime tries to keep such

places *secret.* Most have special police
that do the dictator's bidding, keeping
the whole of the population under
surveillance. Regimes that don't use
designated places can simply "disappear"
people. Often, this is done in late night
raids. S**t, you could wake up in the
morning and see that your neighbor is
gone. You might always wonder
what it is that they did, and hope that
whatever it is, *you* never do the same,
for fear of *disappearing* yourself.

[

FS: And what happens if you are *disappeared?*

[

FP: What do you mean? If you *are* disappeared,
then you're *disappeared,* you know, poof---
gone, into thin air, sayonara…yes?

[

FS: So they *kill* you.

[

FP: *Correct.* I would definitely make that *assumption.*

[

FS: Well, how can this number of *disappeared*
ever be *accounted for*?

[

FP: Do you mean how does the public ever

know exactly how many people it has happened to?

[

FS: *Of course!*

[

FP: That's just what I been getting at. They *don't, they can't!* In fact, if those who *did* the *job,* did it well, then *no one* will ever *know.*

[

FS: Are you saying then, that the victim list attached to *any* of the leaders we've been discussing, could be *greater?*

[

FP: *Absolutely.* Maybe even *much* greater, and I say this because the *reality,* might very well surpass any of your wildest guesses. Stories somehow make it to the surface, whether or not they were started as propaganda by *the regime* itself. Poisonings, gassings, drownings, shootings, even being thrown from planes have all been cited. Each scumbag had their own little unique horrors. Stalin sent some famous Russian *poet* to a camp for writing a poem about him where he eventually died,

Mao had a *vice-principal* in Beijing
beaten to death by his red guards just
because she was an *educator*, at the beginning
of the Cultural Revolution. Pol Pot
had people killed for *wearing glasses* or
speaking another language, labelling them
class-enemies. Romania's Ceaușescu,
though he didn't "make the cut,"
had some engineer beat to death
because he criticized the regime in his *diary.*
The point is, when someone has so much
power, *aggressive* and *unchecked,* it will
only blossom into something even *worse.*
[
FS: *Okay,* I think you've made your…
[
FP: Take for instance how *this conversation*
started. You mentioned "them," a
a placeholder for a group of people
being round up in ways very similar
to these of horrors of the past. You
used "them" in order to avoid saying
_____. Why didn't you say
_____?
[
FS: I don't know. Because I didn't want
to offend anyone in this _____.

We're not exactly in a *private place,*
and I didn't want to draw attention
to the *nature* of this conversation.
[
FP: What do you think would happen
if someone *did* hear and decided
to add themselves to the discussion?
[
FS: *Easy.* At that point I would *leave.*
S**t, I don't know why *I'm* talking,
or more to the point, *listening,* to
you as long as I have, much less
considered *another* opinion.
[
FP: But, what if they thought *exactly* as
you do?
[
FS: Look, they could think *whatever*.
This place has *too many opinions*.
That's why we're so f**ked up!
If people just stopped questioning
and deliberating, and *worrying*…
god, I don't worry in a day nearly
as much as *you* do, as you *all* do.
Maybe, *just maybe*, you should
take a page from *my* book
and follow what the _____

says. _____ was _____
fair and square, so if you're so
big on _____, then let it do its
magic.
[
FP: You sound really *content*.
[
FS: Why shouldn't I be? Life is
short. I'm not gonna be
so presumptuous as to say I'll
leave a *sexy* corpse, but I do
know it's sure as hell not
gonna slow down, just because
I see a *wrench* in the wheel!
Nobody made *me* the person in
charge of *removing* that wrench.
In fact, nobody even made me the
one who has to *identify* it!
[
FP: So, as long as the problem doesn't
affect *you personally…*
[
FS: *Sure,* or anybody *I care* about, of
course…
[
FP: Then basically you could give a
s**t about anybody else, and go

on about *your* day.

[

FS: I'm not a *saint,* you know, out here, in this world we're in, nowadays, it's every _____ for _____, and if _____ has a _____, then that sentiment is *extended.* I can't stop the _____ from rounding up _____. I wouldn't *if I could.* Like I said, I don't feel I've been _____, and I wouldn't have _____ for _____ if I didn't think _____'d do a better job than any of your people would! I *do* know the _____'s not *stupid*. After all, you don't make *that much* _____ by being *dumb*. An if after _____ done doin' what _____'s doin' now, and he finds fault in some *other person,* or *people,* then I'm sure _____'s got a *good reason,* and I'll hear _____ out! Why wouldn't I?

[

FP: *Right.*

[

FS: You just gotta *stop worryin'* is what you *gotta* do. Everything's gonna be *just fine*.

[

FP: Yeah, I guess I haven't drank the particular vat of Fla-Vor-Aid that you obviously have. I have to ask though, *your* _____ is _____, *right?* What are you gonna do if _____ decides the country would better without *them?*

[

FS: You're being *preposterous* now. Pretty *sad* that you'd lower yourself to such depths. You and I both know that _____ are no one _____ would *want* to get rid…

[

FP: *Maybe,* but you're *part-* _____ right? I seem to remember you finding that out last summer when you did that stupid DNA kit thing.

[

FS: That's ridiculous, what you're gettin'

at. I was found to be _____%

_____, and who knows how

accurate that thing is, anyway?

[

FP: Well, *I* surely *don't.* But then again,

I'm not the one *in charge.* What will

you do though, if _____

are next on _____ chopping block?

Dare I ask what *you'd* do, if the

wolves came knocking on *your* door?

*